

FAMILY LIKING FOR SNAKES

MRS. DITMARS HUNTS THEM. HER GIRLS PLAY WITH THEM.

Catching Rattlesnakes a Pastime Mrs. Ditmars Expects to Enjoy This Summer. The Chase Is Exciting and the Specimens Are Interesting to Study.

Catching rattlesnakes is a pastime of one New York woman, Mrs. Raymond L. Ditmars, wife of the curator of the reptile house of the Bronx Zoo. This summer she will indulge in it in company with her husband, C. B. Snyder, Mr. Ditmars's assistant, and one or two others interested scientifically in the reptilian family.

The sunny ledges of the Pequonto Mountains in Connecticut will be the scene of the hunt. Both Mr. and Mrs. Ditmars wear khaki outfits, the former using heavy leggings and the latter top boots to guard against an unexpected attack of a rattler. They carry a complete outfit of first aid necessities, including a special antivenom imported from the Pasteur Institute in Paris for the treatment of poisonous snake bites.

The present trip will be by no means Mrs. Ditmars's first experience of rattlesnake

guide us when we began our hunt in earnest. It needs hot sunshine to coax the rattlers out, so when the following day dawned bright and fair we hit the trail for the rattlesnake ledge. It was noon before we reached the spot, for in spite of the signs blazed along the route the way was so obstructed with fallen trees and deep crevices that the trip was arduous.

"We kept a keen lookout for sunny openings, and as we passed over one near the top our eyes were attracted by a long, slim object which glistened in the sun. It proved to be a large rattlesnake skin, apparently freshly shed, so we knew the owner must not be far away."

"We scarcely had we started searching when a member of the party exclaimed, 'Here it is!' and sure enough, almost immediately the usual note of warning was heard and turning we saw the rattler, a huge black snake, brown with bright yellow stripes, his head drawn back ready to fight."

A member of the party thrust a stick toward him and the snake struck, leaving a yellow stain on the wood which gave ample evidence of the danger involved in bagging the creatures. A snake stick, which is a straight stick bent sharply at



BAGGING A BUNCH OF BLACK, MILK AND GREEN SNAKES.

was made. In a very short time the snake appeared, with mouth open, apparently overcome by the smoke, but before I could slip a noose over its head it took to another rock.

"Once more a smudge was started and in a few moments out the snake came gasping. It was then a matter only of a few moments to bag it. The snake's willingness to run instead of fight was explained when after it was shipped to the reptile house of the Bronx Zoo a family of twelve lively baby rattlers appeared one morning."

"To show the danger attending a rattlesnake hunt and the necessity of meeting every emergency with the closest consideration the final experience of this expedition is interesting. We were just about to return home after our day's work when suddenly the warning note of a rattler was heard almost under the feet of the leader of the party."

"Involuntarily we stopped to investigate and there almost within a foot of the man's leg was a rattler, coiled ready to strike. Quietly asking for a noose, the man extended his arm back without moving his leg, brought it forward and flashed it over the head of the snake."

"From that time we made trips every other day to the mountain ledge for rattlers, meanwhile filling in the odd moments making collections of harmless snakes. It didn't take long to gather a good collection of specimens, and the matter of caring for them became of some moment."

"Cages were constructed, so arranged that the habits of the snakes could be studied. I was put in charge of the cages, and it was most interesting to watch developments. Many broods of snakes were hatched and scores born in the cage, so that the matter of feeding the babies was somewhat difficult, for some were so tiny that they could coil easily in the bottom of a tumbler. In the collection were blacksnakes, green snakes and milk-snakes."

"Nor was it an easy task to transport the snakes to New York. Personally we took charge of 196, and these we took with us in the passenger coach. Naturally

the rattlers made themselves heard whenever the car came to a stop or gave an unexpected jolt. Fortunately none of the passengers, though curious, suspected what we had with us."

"All went well until to my horror I discovered that one of the big water-snakes had escaped. Fortune favored us, though, and before the passengers learned of the occurrence we managed by throwing a light overcoat over the snake to capture it and drop it out of the window."

"On investigation another snake was found to be escaping through a hole in the floor."



MRS. DITMARS AND A BLACKSNAKE.

the bag, and we were in another fix, but just at that moment the train ran into a tunnel, so that under the protecting darkness the reptile was replaced and the bag thoroughly sealed."

With both parents interested in snakes, it isn't strange that the two daughters should be devoted to them also. At no time in their short lives have the youngsters been without one or more snakes as playthings. Mrs. Ditmars buys the children the toys that would ordinarily please a child, but they are quickly forsaken in favor of snakes."

Just now Gladys and Beatrice have for their special pet, Cooky, a lemur that their father uses in one of his "animal vaudeville" lectures. This little animal came from Madagascar and belongs to Mr. Ditmars, not to the Zoo, so that instead of spending his time within four walls of wire Cooky has the freedom of the curator's office except when he is in the hospital. That is very often, for Cooky has a great propensity for getting into trouble, and if he hasn't taken an ink and mullage cocktail and fallen ill, he is upsetting Elwin R. Sanborn's moving picture apparatus and breaking his legs. Between their reptile and animal pets there is plenty of excitement in the Ditmars family."

HARD HAIL FOR THE TEAM.

But With the Knowing Truckman's Aid They Got Up the Hill.

It is a common thing to see the truckman with a heavy load zigzag his way up a steep grade.

Here was a man with a big double truck and a big load and not the best team in the world coming up a downtown street. The slope was not great, but with the load they had it was enough to stall the team. They had come to a point where the grade and the load made a combination that was just too much for them.

Though not the best team in the world they were good and willing; they could be relied upon not to lie down, but to give the very best that was in them, as the driver very well knew; so he let them stand and rest a minute, pull themselves together, and then when there was no more passing he swung them around crosswise of the street.

They could start the load that way and you might have thought the driver was going to turn them around and go back the way he came and seek a leveler street, but he wasn't. He kept 'em going straight across as far as he could go and then he swung 'em up the street, again and it took the last ounce out of them to make it go; but if they were not the greatest horses in the world they were game, and they got away with it.

PAINE'S HOUSE A MUSEUM NOW

DEDICATION OF THE PLACE THE STATE GAVE HIM.

An Oddity in the Place Is a Wax Figure of the Author, Extremely Lifelike. Other Relics of the Writer, Although They Are Very Hard to Come By.

A group of two hundred admirers of Thomas Paine journeyed to New Rochelle recently for the dedication of the Paine National Museum. They saw up there a stretch of open, rolling country, a marble shaft topped with a bronze bust of Paine and a quaint old-fashioned frame house set down beside a shallow boulder fringed lake. A brook, the outlet of the lake, flowed around two sides of the house, tumbled noisily over a moss covered ledge and disappeared in a thicket of alders not far distant. Two bridges spanning the brook gave access to the house at front and side.

On one side of the house, facing the marble shaft, which was erected by public subscription seventy-two years ago, was the study in which Paine was seated on Christmas eve, 1805, when a bullet fired by a would-be assassin whizzed by his head and lodged in the rear wall. The attempt on Paine's life was made by a drunken, irresponsible negro, whom Paine (author of the first plea ever made for the abolition of negro slavery and the emancipation of all the slaves then in bondage) refused to prosecute.

On the other side of the house was the kitchen, its homely, simple furnishings remaining untouched since the time of Paine's occupancy. The little veranda facing the lake with its low rail and broad steps flanked by two massive columns presents the appearance that it did almost a century ago.

Only one thing was lacking, the comfortable chair in which Paine was wont to sit on summer evenings writing intermittently, "as the spirit moved him." This old chair is now in a room on the second floor, a room that was in all probability Paine's bedroom. The visitors, ascending the quaint old stairway and peering in at the door, were startled by what at first glance appeared to be the very man who occupied the room four-score years ago. There in Paine's own chair, his favorite resting place, sat what was to all appearances Paine himself in actual flesh and blood.

The figure was dressed in the picturesque garb of the Revolutionary period, the blue and buff of the signers of the Declaration. His head rested on his left hand, his elbow supported by a low table covered with an American flag and littered with books and papers. A quill pen was grasped by the fingers of his right hand, resting on his knee. At his elbow were inkwell and sandbox.

Near the sandbox rested a candlestick, the identical candlestick carried by Paine when he ascended the stairs to his room for the last time. And yet for all the figure's appearance of animation, the lifelike appearance of the waving hair drawn together in a queue at the back of his neck, the natural coloring of the face and hands outlined against the spotless stock and the ruffles at his wrists, there was stiffness and immobility that betrayed the fact made apparent by closer inspection that it was after all merely a wonderfully clever waxwork.

On a side wall of the little second floor room is an original copy of the famous steel plate engraving made by Sharpe from the still more famous portrait of Paine painted by Romney. The framed title page and preface of the "Age of Reason" also occupy a prominent position. Near them is a collection of portraits of Paine, at various ages, all framed separately.



WAX FIGURE OF PAINE IN THE MUSEUM AT NEW ROCHELLE.

In another frame is a photograph of the most valuable of all Paine relics, the fragment of the great thinker's brain recovered by Dr. Monrore Conway, Paine's biographer, in London and now resting under the Paine monument near the museum. It was reinterred with appropriate ceremonies in 1905 by the Thomas Paine National Historical Association. It is the only part of the author's body that has been recovered since the spoliation of the grave in 1819.

In the little library of the museum are some rare early editions of Paine's works. Conway's great four volume work presented to the museum by his son is also displayed on one of the shelves.

After the visitors had wandered through the quaint old house from cellar to garret and had gazed their fill at the wax figure of the dead author, surrounded by his personal belongings, they assembled before a large platform beside the Paine monument and listened to the dedication remarks of Paine's present day admirers. Leonard Abbott, president of the Paine association, spoke of the history of the old mansion and the difficulties that had attended the collection of the few relics on view there. The house, together with 277 acres of land, was presented to Thomas Paine by the State of New York as a token of gratitude for his services in the cause of liberty. It was originally built of stone and was the property of a Tory named Thomas Devoe, who escaped to Nova Scotia during the Revolution, following the confiscation of his property and belongings.

After the Revolution Paine went to France to aid in the formation of a republic in that country. In his absence the stone house was destroyed by fire, the occurrence being mentioned by Paine in a letter to his good friend Thomas Jefferson. The present frame house was built upon the ruins in 1805. Paine lived there for about two years thereafter. He died in New York in 1809. The house and a part of the original 277 acres

surrounding it are now owned by the Huguenot Association of New Rochelle, which has allotted the little room on the second floor to the Paine Association for its exclusive use. Very few material relics of Paine can be found to-day. This is not surprising when it is borne in mind that he was generally contented to live where "45 would have bought all the furniture."

Mr. Abbott in the course of his address told of the translation of Paine's "Age of Reason" into nearly all the important languages of the world, including Japanese, Russian and Finnish. He spoke of Paine's original advocacy of many of the world's greatest ideas and reforms, among them his plea for justice for women. He told, incidentally, how a prominent American woman suffragist, upon being invited to speak at the dedication of the museum, replied that she could not possibly accept the invitation, "because Thomas Paine wrote only words, words, words!"

Dr. Juliet Severance told of the value of Paine's services to the country, while William M. van der Weyde added a few remarks to that of Dr. Severance had said about "Common Sense" and its author. Paine, Mr. van der Weyde said, first suggested American independence and by his writings did more for the American cause in the Revolution than any other person. He was also the first to propose the abolition of negro slavery, as well as the pioneer advocate of protection for dumb animals, for arbitration and international peace, for woman suffrage, old age pensions, international copyright and for the education of the children of the poor at public expense.

The Paine monument, from the base of which the speeches were made, was adorned with two laurel wreaths of considerable historic interest. One of the wreaths was made of laurel leaves gathered from Valley Forge, from Rocky Hill and from Bordentown, N. J., and was sent to the dedication by the Paine Banquet Association of Philadelphia. The other wreath was made of leaves from the tomb of Washington at Mount Vernon. It was sent by Dr. Shirley.



Photo by Vander Weide, N. Y.

THE THOMAS PAINE MUSEUM AT NEW ROCHELLE.

SANDALS AND FOOTWEAR.

The Earliest Forms and Modifications That Came With Time.

It was undoubtedly as a protection and not as an adornment that man first learned to cover his feet. He had to walk over rough and jagged places where there might be thorns and flints, his clothing being of skins, he drew a portion of skin below his foot and secured it with thongs crossing the ankle and making a loop.

The earliest shoe was a sandal, says the London Globe, and it was most frequently of hide or leather, but sometimes of wood. In Egypt it was woven of palm leaves and papyrus. When the word "shoe" is used in the Scriptures it is commonly sandal that is intended. As a symbol of treachery their enemies under their feet the Egyptians often painted the figures of opponents and persons with whom they were at war on the lining of their sandals. If utility was the first motive art and decoration soon crept in.

Ladies allowed themselves great luxury in the attire of their feet. "How beautiful are the feet with sandals, O prince's daughter!" The sandal became identified with symbolism, very much as the glove became later. To throw a sandal or shoe over a piece of land was a symbol of possession; hence the figure of speech, "Over Edom do I cast my shoe," which has puzzled many choir boys.

It was natural that the sandal should evolve into varying forms. Two varieties developed in Greece for use in dramatic performance, the sock for comedy, the buskin for tragedy. Both became synonymous with their different uses. The buskin reached to the knee, something like a high Wellington, and had very thin soles to increase the stature; the sock only covered as far as the ankle and must have been better for quick movement.

In Rome the sandal became more akin to our modern shoe. There are races in eastern Europe whose civilization derives from Rome and who still cling to the unadorned sandal, but Angles and Gauls were more luxurious. The foot gear of matricians was decorated with gold clasps and embroidered, showing making became an elaborate art.

Common walking shoes frequently had a wooden sole like some of the sandals of Egypt, and it was probably from these that the French peasant of to-day derived his sabots. The wooden clogs indulged in dainty shapes and laced boots, while the Emperors wore purple buskins. Red was permitted to the nobility, the commons had to be content with more sober coloring.

Our earliest British footgear were of course barefooted and it is not possible to say when the sandal first found its way hither. Probably merchants trading here for tin taught the natives its use long before the Romans made it familiar. The Celts indeed were by no means the staid savages popularly imagined; they had attained a considerable civilization in the matter of dress.

What we may term luxury of footgear did not probably take root again until the times of Norman influence. Under this influence some remarkable developments took place. During the time of the Plantagenets the toes of knightly shoes were turned up like rat's paws, or were drawn out to such a length that the points had to be laced to the knees. Other kinds of shoe spread, such as the slipper, with straight, sharp points.

They were fashioned in bright colors, sometimes different colors for each foot, laces and precious stones were studded upon them. Later large rosettes of gold and ribbon were borrowed from France, and from Spain came the use of laces, much worn by cavaliers during the civil war.

It was the sturdy sandals of the Teutonic tribes that enabled them to march across Europe to the walls of Rome, and we know that the footgear of an army is with a most important part of its equipment. Those whom the Romans called Suetonians wore rough sheepskin boots and the Gauls were already noted for their wooden shoes.

In the Far East fashions of sandal and shoe had developed from immemorial times when our large rosettes of gold and ribbon were already noted for their beauty. In the East the sandal was a symbol of the shoe of a small doll. The origin of this barbarism has been much debated, some say that the husband was responsible for it, desiring their wives to be rendered incapable of rapid locomotion, that they might remain indoors and not go about in search of amusement.



GLADYS DITMARS AND HER FAVORITE SNAKE.

hunts. Ever since her marriage her vacations have been largely spent in chasing snakes. One hunt of three weeks up in Sullivan county resulted in bagging 340 snakes, of which 35 were rattlers.

Up in her home in the Bronx Mrs. Ditmars talked of her experiences in rattlesnake hunting, while her two children, Gladys and Beatrice, contentedly sat by, enjoying the antics of their pet snake, Indigo.

"Catching a trout or a striped bass is looked upon as good sport by a good many women," said Mrs. Ditmars, "and I don't undervalue the excitement, but snake hunting is far more interesting. Not only is there the danger and excitement of the chase but the captives remain living things to be observed and studied, and believe me the creatures are well worth all the attention scientists give them."

"Every summer since we were married our vacations have been spent in the wild and wooded districts of Pennsylvania or New York in search of reptilian specimens. One year we spent several weeks in Pennsylvania studying the poisonous copperhead, at another time the timber rattlesnakes. More recently our trip to the mountains of Sullivan county, where three New York men had captured nearly 1,000 snakes, was one of the most interesting of all."

"In this section the mountains are steep, with many shelving rocks upon which the rattlers love to lie and bask in the sunshine. It was to these points that our steps were turned. After settling ourselves at a farmhouse we started one morning on our quest, having in mind a ledge half way up the mountain."

"So overgrown was the mountain with timber and brush that it was a good day's work beating our way to our destination, which was Half Moon ledge, but when the sun was on its downward track the spot was reached, a pile of scraggy rocks with shelving plateaus and deep fissures."

"By the time we reached the place it was too late to start operations, so we took careful note of the location and blazed a trail back by which to

the tip, was pressed against the rattler until a slip noose of strong cord was drawn over his head and pulled taut.

"Don't think for a moment the snake submitted quietly to this operation. Quite the contrary. In a rage he turned upon the stick and struck at it until many amber drops of venom clung to it. He fought in impotent rage against capture and it required skill and ingenuity to secure him without being hurt."

"It was my privilege to discover the next rattler, but much to my disappointment it disappeared almost immediately under a shelving ledge. I suggested smoking the snake out, so a fire of brush



MR. DITMARS AND A RATTLER CAPTURED IN SULLIVAN COUNTY.

extremely muscular, and shows have been frequently held to encourage better food and treatment, much like the donkey shows held in England. The dog replaces the donkey in Belgium, which is seldom seen, for the former costs less to keep and to shelter and serves as a guard for house and goods.

A splendid class of dog is now becoming general, which not only renders untold services in time of peace but is to be counted in time of war, for a group of French officers were present at the Brussels show expressly to watch the weight tests with a view to the use of dogs to transport ammunition to outlying companies, the smaller ones being less likely to be seen by the enemy than service wagons. Moreover, it would allow of an easier distribution of ammunition, while dog carts could travel quicker and over roads impossible for horses or motor cars.

For the use of drawing litters for the wounded they again promise to be useful both on battlefields and in first aid in streets. They would also aid, securing since they serve the customs officers who guard the frontier by helping them to detect a special kind of smuggling, the use of the dog actually tested by finding when he holds by a stout chain, and to some difficult and fatiguing heights.

A splendid class of dogs were first judged for points, the requirements being a compact build, with great strength. They were divided, roughly speaking, into two classes, the lighter dogs of great speed being for use in flat,

level districts, and the stronger, heavier dogs for hilly, mountainous neighborhoods. It has been argued that the dog is not suited for traction, owing to the make of his feet, but against that is placed the argument that many thousands of human beings go barefoot.

It is evident that it is not to an owner's advantage to ill treat or overwork the dog, which is his breadwinner and costs a good deal to buy. While most of those shown yesterday were marked "not for sale," the price of a good full grown dog may run up to £20 and over. In color they are brown to fawn and black, and it is against the law to use any dogs for traction such as postboxes. As a result of the class prescribed.

The demonstrations of the traction powers of the dog were very surprising, the ground chosen being sandy, uneven and rough, with a slight rise. There were two classes for males and females, a light cart being loaded with sacks to different weights. With 285 kilos (627 pounds) most of the dogs entered did the feat easily, at 320 kilos (704 pounds) several accomplished it, while Dog, a fine black dog, 4 years old, who, unlike many of the competitors, could boast no pedigree, took the lead around with ease, barking defiance at a rival as he ran.

Dogs have drawn over 10 hundredweight, and the champion, Dragon III, who was absent through a foreign engagement has a record of 14 hundredweight or more than twice as much as Dog's record. It must be remembered that in the ordinary way the owner helps the dog by pushing the cart when a heavy load is carried, but this was not permitted at the show.

DOGS IN PEACE AND WAR.

Uses to Which They May Be Put Shown at Belgian Exhibition.

A very interesting show of draught dogs has just been held at the Brussels exhibition, where over a hundred animals awaited the judges, the other entered being kept at home by the exigencies of their business, the convenience of milk, vegetables, fruit, laundry work, bread and small joints, which is just now at its height.

The Belgian dogs earned for their country in one year £1,500,000, according to statistics taken ten years ago. This was at the rate of a franc a day, the dogs at that time employed numbering 150,000. These figures must have increased greatly, says the London Evening Standard, for it was then that the Club of the Belgian Draught Dog was formed, with Comte de Wommersley as president, who with M. Réoult Zoutechin, professor of the State Veterinary School, was charged by the Government to draw up a report on the subject, with the result that the class of dog in Belgium as well as its treatment in all its branches was placed under police control.

Clubs and syndicates were formed all over the country to revive an old breed of Belgian dog known as a "matin," which is tall, strong, of smooth, short hair and